



General Assembly

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Agenda item 118

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 11 September 2015

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/69/1007)]

69/321. Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly*The General Assembly,**Reaffirming* its resolution 68/307 of 10 September 2014 and all other previous resolutions relating to the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly,¹*Mindful* of the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations Organization in 2015 and the fact that the Organization has grown considerably since its creation, in terms of both the number of its Member States and the issues on its agenda,*Underlining* the need to further enhance the role, authority, effectiveness and efficiency of the General Assembly,*Reiterating* that the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly is a critical component of the overall reform of the United Nations,*Recognizing* the role of the General Assembly in addressing issues of peace and security, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, and acknowledging its role and authority, established in Article 10 of the Charter, to make recommendations to the Members of the United Nations or to the Security Council or to both on any questions or matters within the scope of the Charter, except as provided in Article 12 thereof,*Reaffirming* the central position of the General Assembly as the chief deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the United Nations, as well as the role of the Assembly in the process of standard-setting and the codification of international law,*Recognizing*, in view of the twentieth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,² the ongoing intergovernmental efforts within the United Nations to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women, and convinced of the need to guarantee equal opportunities for women and men in gaining access to senior decision-making positions, including to the post of Secretary-General, bearing in mind the need to select the best candidates,

¹ Resolutions 46/77, 47/233, 48/264, 51/241, 52/163, 55/14, 55/285, 56/509, 57/300, 57/301, 58/126, 58/316, 59/313, 60/286, 61/292, 62/276, 63/309, 64/301, 65/315, 66/294 and 67/297.

² *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution I, annexes I and II.



Reaffirming the role and authority of the General Assembly in global matters of concern to the international community, including in global governance, as set out in the Charter,

Welcoming the efforts of the President of the General Assembly to reinvigorate the revitalization of the work of the Assembly during its sixty-ninth session,

Taking note of the observations and proposals on improving the working methods of the Main Committees of the General Assembly made by the Chairs of the Main Committees at the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly thematic meeting on working methods, held on 14 April 2015,

1. *Welcomes* the report of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly and the updated inventory of Assembly resolutions on revitalization annexed thereto;³

2. *Takes note with appreciation* of the multilingual web page devoted to the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly, accessible directly from the United Nations website, which exists in all six official languages, and invites the Secretariat to continue updating regularly and equally that web page and its substantive content in a cost-effective manner;

3. *Decides* to establish, at its seventieth session, an ad hoc working group on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly, open to all Member States:

(a) To identify further ways to enhance the role, authority, effectiveness and efficiency of the Assembly, inter alia, by building on the progress achieved in past sessions as well as on previous resolutions, including evaluating the status of their implementation;

(b) To submit a report thereon to the Assembly at its seventieth session;

4. *Also decides* that the Ad Hoc Working Group shall continue its review of the inventory of General Assembly resolutions on revitalization annexed to the report of the Ad Hoc Working Group submitted at the sixty-ninth session of the Assembly, and, as a result, continue to update the inventory to be attached to the report to be submitted at the seventieth session of the Assembly;

5. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General,⁴ and requests the Secretary-General to submit an update on the provisions of the General Assembly resolutions on revitalization addressed to the Secretariat for implementation that have not been implemented, with an indication of the constraints and reasons behind any lack of implementation, for further consideration by the Ad Hoc Working Group at the seventieth session;

Role and authority of the General Assembly

6. *Reaffirms* the role and authority of the General Assembly, including on questions relating to international peace and security, in accordance with Articles 10 to 14 and 35 of the Charter of the United Nations, where appropriate, using the procedures set forth in rules 7 to 10 of the rules of procedure of the Assembly,

³ A/69/1007.

⁴ A/69/793.

which enable swift and urgent action by the Assembly, bearing in mind that the Security Council has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, in accordance with Article 24 of the Charter;

7. *Recognizes* that implementation of General Assembly resolutions, including those related to the revitalization of its work, enhances the role, authority, effectiveness and efficiency of the Assembly, and underlines the important role and responsibility of Member States in their full implementation;

8. *Reaffirms* that the relationship between the principal organs of the United Nations is mutually reinforcing and complementary, in accordance with and with full respect for their respective functions, authority, powers and competencies as enshrined in the Charter, and in this regard stresses the importance of further ensuring increased cooperation, coordination and the exchange of information among the Presidents of the principal organs and also with the Secretariat of the United Nations, in particular the Secretary-General;

9. *Welcomes with appreciation* the continued practice of holding periodic informal briefings by the Secretary-General on his priorities, travels and most recent activities, including his participation in international meetings and events organized outside the United Nations, and encourages the continuation of this practice;

10. *Reaffirms* that the presence of permanent missions serves to assist in the realization of the purposes and principles of the United Nations, recognizes the importance of their role in contributing to the effectiveness and efficiency of the General Assembly, as well as the role of the Secretariat in accommodating the work of permanent missions, and in this regard invites the President of the General Assembly at its seventieth session to conduct an informal meeting on this subject to consider ways and means to further enhance the cooperation between permanent missions and the Secretariat and to transmit a summary of the meeting to the Secretary-General;

11. *Also reaffirms* the importance and benefit of continuing interaction between the General Assembly and international or regional forums and organizations dealing with global matters of concern to the international community, as well as with civil society, where appropriate, and encourages the exploration of appropriate actions or measures, while fully respecting the intergovernmental nature of the Assembly, in conformity with its relevant rules of procedure;

12. *Recognizes* the value of holding interactive inclusive thematic debates on current issues of critical importance to the international community, and calls upon the President of the General Assembly to organize such debates in close consultation with the General Committee and the Member States, including with regard to the preliminary programme of such debates, in order to enable an adequate level of participation and an appropriate allocation of time for substantive interactive discussion during the debates so as to enable all interested delegations to state their positions and to facilitate, where appropriate, results-oriented and productive outcomes of such debates, and in this context welcomes the initiative of the President of the Assembly at its sixty-ninth session to select "Delivering on and implementing a transformative post-2015 development agenda" as the theme of the general debate;

13. *Takes note* of the letter dated 4 December 2014 from the President of the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session addressed to all Permanent Representatives and Permanent Observers expressing a variety of views of Member States on the content and quality of the annual report of the Security Council to the

Assembly, and encourages continuing efforts to ensure the inclusion in the report of more substantive information on the work of the Council, as appropriate;

14. *Invites* the Secretariat, including the Department of Public Information, while carrying out its activities, as mandated by the General Assembly, to continue its efforts to raise the visibility of the Assembly and to enhance, in the light of the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations, world public and media awareness of the contribution made by the Assembly to the fulfilment of the goals of the Organization, as set out in the Charter;

15. *Requests* the Secretary-General, under relevant agenda items, to bring to the attention of Member States constraints that have prevented the Secretary-General from implementing those provisions of General Assembly resolutions that are addressed to the Secretariat;

Working methods

16. *Appreciates* the briefings by the Chairs of the Main Committees of the General Assembly to the Ad Hoc Working Group about the working methods of their respective Committees during the sixty-ninth session of the Assembly, and in this regard encourages the Main Committees:

(a) To ensure adequate coordination in their work while avoiding overlap and duplication;

(b) To hold elections for the bureaux of the Main Committees at least three months before the opening of each session, and preferably up to six months in advance of the session, and calls upon the regional groups to proceed with relevant nominations in a timely manner and in accordance with the interim arrangement set out in Assembly decision 68/505 of 1 October 2013;

(c) To benefit from their respective intranet and other online services to facilitate the smooth organization and timely conclusion of their work;

(d) To further enhance sharing of information on the work and activities of the Main Committees within each Main Committee;

(e) To further improve the management of the negotiation process for Assembly resolutions;

17. *Calls upon* outgoing Chairs of the Main Committees to brief incoming Chairs on best practices and lessons learned from previous sessions of the Main Committees and to provide their written observations and lessons learned to their immediate successors, and encourages the incoming Chairs and bureaux of the Main Committees to consult with Member States shortly after their election on how the work will be conducted during the upcoming session of their Committee;

18. *Reaffirms* existing relevant mandates related to the improvement of the working methods of the Main Committees, including section C of the annex to resolution 58/316 of 1 July 2004, paragraphs 7 to 13 of resolution 59/313 of 12 September 2005 and cluster III of the annex to resolution 60/286 of 8 September 2006;

19. *Requests* each Main Committee to further discuss its working methods at the beginning of every session, and in this regard invites the Chairs of the Main Committees to brief the Ad Hoc Working Group during the seventieth session on any best practices and lessons learned with a view to improving working methods, as appropriate;

20. *Requests* the Secretary-General to include, in his report submitted at the seventy-first session of the General Assembly, under the agenda item entitled "Pattern of conferences", information regarding the basis for the current practice whereby Member States bear the additional costs of using United Nations Headquarters conference services during business hours;

21. *Recalls* its decision in resolution 68/307 to conduct the elections of the non-permanent members of the Security Council and the members of the Economic and Social Council about six months before the elected members assume their responsibilities, beginning at the seventieth session, welcomes the current practice of the Security Council of inviting its elected members to observe some of its meetings and activities prior to the assumption of their responsibilities, and welcomes such efforts to afford elected members appropriate opportunities to prepare for their tenure in the Security Council;

22. *Emphasizes* that the General Assembly and its Main Committees, at the seventieth session, in consultation with Member States, should continue their consideration of and make proposals for the further biennialization, triennialization, clustering and elimination of items on the agenda of the Assembly, including through the introduction of a sunset clause, with the clear consent of the sponsoring State or States, taking into account the relevant recommendations of the Ad Hoc Working Group;

23. *Recalls* its resolution 48/264 of 29 July 1994, by which it adopted the Guidelines on the Rationalization of the Agenda of the General Assembly;

24. *Also recalls* the need to avoid duplication and overlap of the agendas of the General Assembly, especially of its Second and Third Committees, the Economic and Social Council, and its subsidiary bodies, and the high-level political forum on sustainable development convened under the auspices of the Council and the Assembly, as well as all other related forums, in accordance with relevant rules of procedure;

25. *Further recalls* rules 153 and 154 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, and encourages the Chairs of the Main Committees and the Secretary-General to ensure observance of these rules, within their respective mandates;

26. *Stresses* the importance of enhancing the role of the General Committee to support the work of the General Assembly;

27. *Reiterates its invitation* to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the Chairs of the Main Committees, in consultation with the General Committee and Member States, to enhance the coordination of the scheduling of the meetings of the Assembly, including high-level meetings and high-level thematic debates, with a view to optimizing their interactivity and effectiveness, especially during the general debate, and distribution of such events throughout the session;

28. *Reaffirms*, in this regard, resolution 57/301 of 13 March 2003, by which the General Assembly, inter alia, decided that the general debate shall open on the Tuesday following the opening of the regular session of the Assembly and shall be held without interruption, and encourages the scheduling of future high-level meetings during the first half of the year, from within existing resources, taking into account the calendar of conferences and without prejudice to the current practice of convening one high-level meeting in September at the beginning of each session of the Assembly;

29. *Recalls* the interim arrangement approved by the General Assembly in decision 68/505, recommending a pattern for the rotation of the Chairs of the Main Committees until the seventy-third session of the Assembly, reiterates its request that the Ad Hoc Working Group prepare long-term arrangements concerning the election of the Chairs and Rapporteurs of the Main Committees with the aim of establishing a predictable, transparent and fair mechanism, in consultation with regional groups, and that it submit them to the Assembly no later than at its seventy-second session, and in this regard invites Member States to present proposals and begin at an early stage to devote attention to the matter of concluding a future arrangement, which would come into effect at the seventy-fourth session of the Assembly, with the annex to resolution 68/307 containing the guidelines on the election of the Chairs and Rapporteurs of the Main Committees to be considered in this context;

30. *Encourages* Member States to seek gender balance in the distribution of Chairs of the Main Committees and in the position of the President of the General Assembly;

31. *Also encourages* Member States to make, to the extent possible, full use of the e-services provided by the Secretariat, in order to save costs, reduce the environmental impact and improve the distribution of documents, and in this regard requests the Secretariat to further improve, harmonize and, where appropriate, unify such e-services;

Selection and appointment of the Secretary-General and other executive heads

32. *Reaffirms its commitment* to continue, in the Ad Hoc Working Group, in accordance with the provisions of Article 97 of the Charter, its consideration of the revitalization of the role of the General Assembly in the selection and appointment of the Secretary-General, and recalls all relevant resolutions, including resolutions 11(I) of 24 January 1946, 46/77 of 12 December 1991, 47/233 of 17 August 1993, 48/264, 51/241 of 31 July 1997, 52/163 of 15 December 1997, 55/14 of 3 November 2000, 55/285 of 7 September 2001, 56/509 of 8 July 2002, 57/300 of 20 December 2002, 57/301, 58/126 of 19 December 2003, 58/316, 59/313, 60/286, 61/292 of 2 August 2007, 62/276 of 15 September 2008, 63/309 of 14 September 2009, 64/301 of 13 September 2010, 65/315 of 12 September 2011, 66/294 of 17 September 2012, 67/297 of 29 August 2013 and 68/307, reaffirming the applicable procedures set out in the rules of procedure of the Assembly, in particular rule 141, and acknowledging relevant existing Assembly practices;

33. *Calls upon* the President of the General Assembly to monitor and review the Assembly's implementation of the above-mentioned resolutions;

34. *Reiterates* that the process of selecting and appointing the Secretary-General differs from the process used with regard to other executive heads in the organizations of the United Nations system, given the roles of the Security Council and the General Assembly in accordance with Article 97 of the Charter, and emphasizes in particular that the process of selection of the Secretary-General shall be guided by the principles of transparency and inclusiveness, building on best practices and the participation of all Member States;

35. *Requests* the Presidents of the General Assembly and the Security Council to start the process of soliciting candidates for the position of Secretary-General through a joint letter addressed to all Member States, containing a description of the entire process and inviting candidates to be presented in a timely manner;

36. *Also requests* the Presidents of the General Assembly and the Security Council to jointly circulate to all Member States on an ongoing basis the names of individuals that have been submitted for consideration as candidates for the position of Secretary-General together with accompanying documents, including curricula vitae;

37. *Notes* that the selection and appointment of the next Secretary-General is expected to take place in 2016, and as a result requests, without prejudice to the role of the principal organs as enshrined in Article 97 of the Charter, the Presidents of the General Assembly, in particular those at the seventieth and seventy-first sessions of the Assembly, to actively support this process in accordance with the role accorded to them by relevant resolutions, including the present resolution;

38. *Stresses* the need to ensure equal and fair distribution based on gender and geographical balance, while meeting the highest possible requirements, on the appointment of executive heads of the Organization, including the Secretary-General, and in this regard invites Member States to consider presenting women as candidates for the position of Secretary-General;

39. *Stresses*, in particular, the need to ensure the appointment of the best possible candidate for the position of Secretary-General, who embodies the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity and demonstrates a firm commitment to the purposes and principles of the United Nations, and invites Member States to present candidates with proven leadership and managerial abilities, extensive experience in international relations and strong diplomatic, communication and multilingual skills;

40. *Requests* the Secretary-General to brief the Ad Hoc Working Group in a streamlined and comprehensive way on the gender balance and regional origin of the executive heads and the Senior Management Group of the Organization;

41. *Takes note* of the recommendations contained in the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the selection and conditions of service of executive heads in the organizations of the United Nations system,⁵ proposing that the General Assembly conduct hearings or meetings with candidates running for the position of Secretary-General;

42. *Decides*, without prejudice to the role of the principal organs as enshrined in Article 97 of the Charter, to conduct informal dialogues or meetings with candidates for the position of Secretary-General, without any prejudice to any candidate who does not participate, thus contributing to the transparency and inclusivity of the process;

43. *Recalls* its resolution 52/12 B of 19 December 1997, in particular paragraph 2 thereof, in which it noted that the Secretary-General will appoint the Deputy Secretary-General following consultations with Member States, and stresses that the process of appointment of executive heads of the Organization should be in accordance with relevant rules of procedure and as set out in the Charter;

44. *Affirms its readiness* to continue discussing all the issues relating to the selection and appointment of the Secretary-General in all their aspects within the Ad Hoc Working Group during its seventieth session, including those contained in the report of the Ad Hoc Working Group as contained in document A/69/1007;

⁵ A/65/71.

Strengthening the institutional memory of the Office of the President of the General Assembly

45. *Notes with appreciation* the views expressed by the Office of the President of the General Assembly to the Ad Hoc Working Group on the strengthening of the institutional memory of the Office of the President of the Assembly and its relationship with the Secretariat⁵ and measures already undertaken in this regard, while continuing to explore additional measures where feasible, and notes the support provided by the General Assembly and Economic and Social Council Affairs Division of the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management of the Secretariat to the Office of the President of the Assembly;

46. *Encourages* the Presidents of the General Assembly to continue with the practice of periodically briefing Member States on their activities, including official travel;

47. *Commends* the initiative of convening a retreat on the strengthening of the General Assembly, which brings together the incoming and outgoing presidencies of each session of the Assembly, and in this regard takes note of the summary of the proceedings of the retreat held on 26 and 27 June 2014;⁶

48. *Encourages* exchanges between the President-elect of the General Assembly and the Council of Presidents so that Presidents-elect may benefit from the experiences of former Presidents in terms of best practices and lessons learned, as part of strengthening the institutional memory of the Office of the President of the General Assembly;

49. *Requests* the outgoing Presidents of the General Assembly to transmit to their successors a summary of their work during their terms of office and to brief them on the lessons learned and best practices, and encourages the holding of a structured and constructive exchange of experiences between them in the three-month transition period;

50. *Encourages* Presidents-elect to continue to ensure respect for balanced gender and geographical representation in the Office of the President of the General Assembly;

51. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the Ad Hoc Working Group at the seventieth session of the General Assembly on sources of the funding and staffing of the Office of the President of the General Assembly, including on any technical, logistical, protocol-related or financial questions, and for more clarification on the budgetary basis for the provision of such support by the Secretariat;

52. *Emphasizes* the need to ensure, from within agreed resources, that the Office of the President of the General Assembly is allocated dedicated Secretariat staff, with responsibility for coordinating, in an efficient and capable manner, the transition between Presidents, managing interactions between the President and the Secretary-General and preserving institutional memory, and also emphasizes the desirability for staff in the Office of the President of the Assembly to be seconded from among Member States in a timely manner;

⁶ A/69/562, annex.

53. *Notes* that the activities of the President of the General Assembly have increased markedly in recent years, recalls provisions regarding support for the Office of the President of the Assembly in previous resolutions, and expresses continued interest in seeking ways to further support the Office, in accordance with existing procedures, in particular rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the Assembly;

54. *Recalls its request* to the Secretary-General to submit, in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016–2017, proposals to review the budget allocation to the Office of the President of the General Assembly in accordance with existing procedures, and in this connection looks forward to considering such proposals during the main part of its seventieth session;

55. *Stresses* the importance of the contributions of Member States to the Trust Fund in support of the Office of the President of the General Assembly, and in this regard notes with appreciation contributions that have been made to the Fund and encourages Member States to continue to contribute to the Fund;

56. *Requests* the President of the General Assembly, in cooperation with the Secretariat, to report to the Ad Hoc Working Group at the seventieth session of the Assembly on the role, mandate and activities of the President.

*103rd plenary meeting
11 September 2015*